

Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

Columbus, Ohio

Profile of Drug Indicators

March 2003



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Columbus, Ohio

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

Demographics¹

- Population: 711,470 (2000 Census)
- Race/Ethnicity (2000 Census): 66.9% white; 24.3% black/African American; 0.3% American Indian/Alaska Native; 3.4% Asian; 0.0% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander; 0.3% other race; 2.4% two or more races; 2.5% Hispanic/Latino (of any race)
- Columbus is located in Franklin County.

Politics

- Mayor: Michael Coleman²
- City Council: Kevin Boyce, Patsy Thomas, Matthew D. Habash, Michael Mentel, Mayrellen O'Shaughnessy, Richard Sensenbrenner, Charleta B. Tavares³
- Police Chief: James G. Jackson⁴
- Franklin County Sheriff: Jim Karnes⁵

Programs/Initiatives

- Columbus Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program⁶
The Columbus Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program provides prevention, intervention, and treatment services to Columbus citizens. Prevention training is provided for parents, professionals, college students and businesses. This program also provides outpatient treatment with specialized services for women, pregnant women, African American men, cocaine and marijuana abusers, and chronic relapsers.
- You're Extra Special (YES)⁷
YES provides support and education services to help children ages 5-13 cope when someone they love abuses alcohol or other drugs. YES focuses on the needs, feelings and perceptions of the child, not the person using drugs. The program is for children:
 - whose parents are in recovery programs
 - who live in foster care or with adoptive families
 - who care about someone who uses alcohol or other drugs
- Substance Abuse General Education (SAGE)⁸
Available weekdays and evenings at the Columbus Health Department, SAGE provides drug abuse education for adults, young adults, and their families to reduce the risk of alcohol or drug problems.

Federal Funding

- Drug-Free Communities Support Program grantees in Columbus:⁹
 - FY 2002: no Columbus grantees
 - FY 2001: no Columbus grantees
 - FY 2000: \$73,425 to the Southside Community Initiative Coalition

- FY 1999: \$93,250 to the Franklin County Educational Council Foundation
- FY 1998: no Columbus grantees
- Executive Office for Weed and Seed¹⁰
One site in Columbus has received Federal funding and official recognition as a Weed and Seed site.
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) FY 2001 Discretionary funds awarded to Columbus grantees:¹¹
 - Center for Mental Health Services:
 - \$60,000 to the We Care Network. Project period: 9/30/01-9/29/04
 - \$346,378 to the Ohio Department of Mental Hygiene. Project period: 9/30/00-8/31/03
 - Center for Substance Abuse Prevention:
 - no Columbus grantees
 - Center for Substance Abuse Treatment:
 - \$324,486 to the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services. Project period: 9/30/99-9/29/02
 - \$366,274 to the Columbus AIDS Task Force. Project period: 9/30/01-9/29/06
 - \$334,359 to the Ohio State University. Project period: 9/30/99-9/29/02
- Columbus did not receive any funding through the FY 2002 Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Grant Program.¹²
- Columbus did not receive any methamphetamine funding in 2002 from the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.¹³
- Columbus did not receive any funding from the FY 2001 Housing and Urban Development Drug Elimination Grant.¹⁴
- FY 2001 Office of Justice Programs and Community Oriented Policing Services grant amounts received by Columbus recipients:¹⁵
 - \$73,236,850 in formula funds
 - \$14,418,046 in discretionary funds

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- During 2000, the Narcotics Bureau of the Columbus Police Department charged 566 people with narcotic-related offenses, a 23% decrease over the previous year.¹⁶
- The Narcotics Bureau mailed 1,401 Landlord Notification letters during 2000, informing property owners/managers that complaints of illegal narcotic activities were registered against their properties.¹⁷
- The Narcotics Bureau Pharmaceutical Unit conducted 191 investigations during 2000, resulting in charges against the following individuals: nine nurses; six pharmacist technicians; one dental hygienist; two doctors; and two medical assistants.¹⁸
- From January to October 2002, there were 107 murder/manslaughter offenses known to the Columbus Police.¹⁹

Number of Offenses Known to Police, Columbus, 2000-October 2002

Offense	Full Year 2000	Full Year 2001	January- October 2002
Murder/manslaughter	113	93	107
Rape	650	509	566
Robbery	3,026	2,485	2,921
Aggravated assault	2,046	1,815	1,922
Burglary	14,070	11,456	13,302
Larceny over \$500	8,919	7,932	7,905
Larceny under \$500	25,740	22,252	22,109
Vehicle theft	7,277	6,119	6,189
Other assaults	19,306	13,640	16,137
Forgery	2,268	1,291	324
Fraud/embezzlement	1,906	1,486	561
Indecent exposure	150	78	60
Molestation	249	186	193
Other sex crimes	193	116	128
All other offenses	19,585	14,129	7,742

Drugs

➤ Cocaine

Crack cocaine continues to be readily available in Columbus and other areas in central Ohio. It is often cut with baking soda and Similac. Young crack users typically start by lacing marijuana with crack and then switch just to using crack. A crack rock typically sells for \$5. While not as available as crack, powder cocaine can be easily obtained in Columbus. A gram of powder cocaine sells for \$100 and a line sells for \$10.²⁰

➤ Heroin

There has been a resurgence in heroin popularity in Columbus, partially attributed to its high quality. An increase in younger users, particularly white and affluent, has been reported.²¹

➤ Marijuana

Marijuana is plentiful, of good quality, and increasing in use in Columbus.²²

➤ Methamphetamine

One method of methamphetamine administration reported in Columbus is to mix it with water and then insert the mixture into the rectum.²³ Methamphetamine is popular in the gay club scene, but its availability is somewhat limited. It sells for \$60 a quarter gram and \$200 a gram.²⁴

➤ Club Drugs

GHB and hallucinogens remain popular among Columbus's younger population. Hallucinogens are also widely used in area gay clubs. Ketamine and MDMA are often used together in gay clubs.²⁵ Ecstasy, which sells for \$25-\$30 a hit, remains popular among young people in the Columbus area. Despite the popularity of GHB, some people recognize its dangers and use ketamine instead, believing that ketamine is less dangerous. Ketamine sells for \$20 a quarter gram and \$70 a gram and is snorted. A mixture of ketamine with cocaine or crystal methamphetamine has been reported.²⁶

- **Other Drugs**
Lorazepam (Ativan) and diazepam (Valium) are used as “maintenance drugs” when heroin is not available. One Columbus treatment provider reported that zolpidem (Ambien) is becoming popular among adolescents and is not perceived as addictive.²⁷

Juveniles

- In November 2000, more than 75,000 Franklin County youth in grades six through twelve took part in the Primary Prevention Awareness, Attitude, and Use Survey (PPAAUS).²⁸
- The incidence of regular marijuana use among youth in Franklin County was down in 2000 compared to the 1994 and 1997 PPAAUS results. Twelve percent of those surveyed reported regular use of marijuana during 2000. The survey showed that approximately 1% of sixth graders and 5% of seventh and eighth graders used marijuana on a regular basis.²⁹
- An average of 16% of teens in grades nine and ten reported smoking marijuana at least once a month and 10% reported smoking marijuana at least once a week. Among juniors and seniors, 23% smoked marijuana regularly and 14% used it at least once a week.³⁰
- The 2000 PPAAUS survey also revealed that an average of 0.5% of middle school and 1% of high school youth reported regular use of cocaine.³¹
- Approximately 0.5% of Franklin County youth surveyed in 2000 reported regular use of steroids.³²
- One-half percent of middle and 3% of high school age youth reported using designer drugs at least once a month.³³

Enforcement

- Columbus Police Department Narcotics Bureau Units:³⁴
 - Package Interdiction Section: Members of this unit are responsible for conducting inspections of delivery companies such as UPS and FedEx.
 - Columbus Airport Section: The detectives assigned to the Airport are part of a DEA Jet-Way Task Force. The purpose of this unit is to monitor flights and identify and intercept potential traffickers.
 - Additional Narcotics Bureau investigation units include the following: Investigative “A” Unit; Investigative “B” Unit; Investigative “C” Unit; Investigative “D” Unit; INI Unit; and the In/Tac Tactical Unit.
- As of October 31, 2001, there were 2,196 full-time law enforcement employees in Columbus.³⁵

Trafficking and Seizures

- Wholesale drug distributors use metropolitan areas like Columbus as distribution centers for smaller cities in and outside the state.³⁶
- Caucasian, Colombian, Cuban, Dominican, Mexican, and local independent groups supply wholesale quantities of cocaine to Columbus.³⁷
- During 2000, the Columbus Narcotics Bureau Package Interdiction Section seized more than 1,800 pounds of marijuana, valued at \$2.7 million.³⁸

Drugs Seized, Package Interdiction Section, Columbus, 2000

Item Seized	Amount Seized	Value
Marijuana	1,800.6 pounds	\$2,700,000
Cocaine	1.0 pound	\$13,000
Crack	350 grams	\$35,800
Ecstasy	3,569 units	\$71,380
Guns	7	--
Cash	--	\$467,643

- The Narcotics Bureau International Airport unit seized 1,230 pounds of marijuana during 2000.³⁹

Drugs Seized, International Airport Unit, Columbus, 2000

Item Seized	Amount Seized	Value
Marijuana	1,230 pounds	\$1,845,000
Cocaine	1 kilo	\$84,000
Cash	--	\$463,473

- During 2000, the Narcotics Bureau Pharmaceutical Unit seized 4,036 pills valued at \$15,049.⁴⁰
- Additional drug seizures made by Narcotics Bureau units include the following:⁴¹
 - Investigative “B” Unit: During 2000, this unit seized \$45,877 in cash, 7.6 grams of heroin (valued at \$76,000), 32.3 ounces of crack (\$90,440), 8.2 ounces of cocaine (\$6,663), 318 pounds of marijuana (\$477,000), ten unit doses of ecstasy (\$200), and 58 unit doses of Ritalin (\$290).
 - Investigative “C” Unit: Detectives in this unit conducted a long-term investigation involving Dominican cocaine traffickers during 2000. In November 2000, the main targets were arrested and the following seizures were reported as a result of the investigation: 4 ounces of crack (valued at \$11,200), 500 ounces of cocaine (\$406,250), 7.5 pounds of marijuana (\$11,250); 48 marijuana plants (\$48,000); 22 firearms, and more than \$10,000 in cash.
 - Investigative “D” Unit: During 2000, this unit seized 36 ounces of crack (valued at \$100,800), 17.5 ounces of cocaine (\$14,218), 19.5 pounds of marijuana (\$29,250), 152 doses of ecstasy (\$3,040), \$168,328 in cash, and 12 guns.
 - INI Unit: During 2000, this unit seized 189.6 grams of crack/cocaine (valued at \$19,339), 13.2 pounds of marijuana (\$19,800), 1,700 doses of LSD (\$2,550), three vehicles, 18 firearms, and \$22,810 in cash.
 - In/Tac Tactical Unit: During 2000, this unit confiscated 159 weapons, \$97,959 in cash, and \$232,347 worth of narcotics.
- In 2000, the Columbus Canine Unit seized drugs worth an estimated \$654,125.⁴²

Courts

- Drug Courts⁴³
As of January 8, 2003, there were no drug courts in existence or being planned in Columbus or anywhere else in Franklin County.

Consequences of Use

- During 2001, the Franklin County Coroner's Office reported 4,042 death calls. This means the case was considered by the caller to be of a suspicious or unusual nature, was due to an accident, involved a death that occurred within 24 hours of admission to a health care facility, or occurred when no attending physician was available to sign the death certificate. Of the deaths:
 - 313 cases involved drug or alcohol intoxication that may have contributed to the ultimate cause of death; and
 - there were 154 drug or alcohol intoxications that would be considered life threatening and a probable cause of death.⁴⁴
- OxyContin was found in 36 of the 2001 Franklin County coroner's 1,216 cases in which toxicology tests were performed. Sixteen people took fatal doses of the drug.⁴⁵

Treatment

- The Columbus Health Department Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program provides the following treatment services: assessment, case management, individual and group counseling; gender-specific intensive outpatient treatment; gender-specific moderate outpatient treatment; relapse prevention; Unity Program (dedicated to serving African American men); and services for homeless men.⁴⁶
- Columbus treatment providers report that the number of clients who use OxyContin is small but increasing.⁴⁷
- Treatment providers in Columbus report that while treatment availability is perceived as adequate, there continues to be a time gap between when a client expresses the desire to go to treatment and when they can actually be admitted. One treatment facility reported a waiting period of one to two weeks, while some users report a year-long waiting period for treatment involving methadone.⁴⁸

Sources

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² Columbus Mayor Web site: <http://ci.columbus.oh.us/mayor.html>

³ Columbus City Council Web site: <http://council.ci.columbus.oh.us/>

⁴ Columbus Police Department Web site: <http://www.columbuspolice.org/>

⁵ Franklin County Sheriff's Office Web site: <http://www.sheriff.franklin.oh.us/>

⁶ Columbus Health Department Web site, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program section: http://www.cmhhealth.org/programs/alcohol_drug.html

⁷ Columbus Health Department, You're Extra Special Program site: <http://www.cmhhealth.org/programs/yes2/YesProgramHome.htm>

⁸ Columbus Department of Health, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Brochure: <http://www.cmhhealth.org/docs/A&Dbrochure1.pdf>

⁹ Drug-Free Communities Support Program Web site, Ohio section: <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/dfcs/states/oh.html>

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- ²⁸ Franklin County Safe and Drug-Free Schools Consortium, *2000 Primary Prevention Awareness, Attitude, & Use Survey*, Executive Summary: <http://www.edcouncil.org/programs/drugfree/ppaus/execsum.htm>
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- ³⁰ Ibid.
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